

THE Center for the Army  
Profession and Ethic  
PRESENTS



# BACKBONE OF THE ARMY

**FACILITATOR'S GUIDE**

A VIRTUAL EXPERIENCE IMMERSIVE LEARNING SIMULATION (VEILS®)



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# OVERVIEW

## I. Introduction

**BACKBONE OF THE ARMY** focuses on the Profession and addresses the challenges that Platoon Sergeants will face. It demonstrates situations in which a Platoon Sergeant has the opportunity to cultivate a unit climate that promotes the development of professional Soldiers. The graduate of the Advanced Leader Course (ALC) will be moving into higher leadership positions. His or her impact on the unit grows from mentoring Soldiers to mentoring junior leaders. Decision-making advances from solving individual incidents and Soldier problems to situations that will affect an operational unit. The ALC graduate continues to self-develop as a Senior Noncommissioned Officer and must also serve as a Model of Army the Profession and Professionals.

The audience for **BACKBONE OF THE ARMY** consists of Sergeants who reflect the broad Army demographic. Nearly all of the students in the Advanced Leader Course have completed from one to three combat deployments. The majority are E-6s, though many are E-5s and a few are E-7s.

The playable character in the simulation is SSG ("Soli") Sharpe. He has been in the Army for eight years. At the beginning of Act I, we learn that SSG Sharpe has made the list for promotion to E7.

Using the simulation, students will experience leading and making decisions as a Staff Sergeant (and later as a Sergeant First Class) in a platoon environment. Students will have the opportunity to exercise moral judgment, face challenges in developing subordinates, and to evaluate and shape the leadership climate of the unit. The scenarios and dilemmas that students encounter will become progressively more sophisticated. Students will make decisions on the behalf of Staff Sergeant Sharpe and then see the consequences of those decisions play out. **BACKBONE OF THE ARMY** helps them think through and practice making realistic decisions in a safe environment so that they can apply what they learn to critical real-life situations.

## II. Learning Objectives

**Within the context of the simulation, the learning objectives are for the students to:**

1. Examine the Army Profession
  - a ) Builds understanding as an Army professional upon the concepts of the Army Profession and Ethic that were learned as a junior leader
  - b ) Reflects on membership in the Army Profession as a new higher level leader with increased responsibilities
  - c ) Gains a more strategic view of "Why the Army fights and how the Army fights"
2. Promote Soldier professional character development in the command climate

- a ) Continues to develop self as an Army professional
    - i. Develops and executes a self-development plan
    - ii. Demonstrates ethical leadership
  - b ) Sets conditions for Soldier professional character development
  - c ) Integrate character development considerations (ethical decision making, rewarding positive behaviors, standards for behavior, etc.) into everyday unit structures and processes
  - d ) Emphasize personal and professional character development by mentoring junior leaders to develop their Soldiers
  - e ) Ensure Soldier professional growth is part of their developmental plans
3. Cultivate a professional command climate
- a ) Develops unit professional identity as part of improving unit cohesion
  - b ) Creates a safe-communication atmosphere where Soldiers don't fear repercussions for discussing issues/concerns, are open to moral/ethical learning/development, and communicate lessons-learned up and down the chain-of-command
  - c ) Exposes Soldiers to professional exemplars
  - d ) Includes junior leaders in the assessment of climate and execution of climate programs

**BACKBONE OF THE ARMY** is divided into three sections: Act 1, Act 2, and Act 3. Act 1 is set in a predeployment garrison environment, while Act 2 focuses on deployment and combat operations. Act 3 centers on the return to garrison life.

### III. System Requirements

**To play the Advanced Leader Course, you must have:**

- Windows XP, Vista, or 7 / Mac OS 10.4 or higher
- Adobe Flash Player 10+
- 1Ghz or faster processor (2GHz recommended for full-screen playback at high resolutions)
- 256MB of RAM (512MB recommended)

- DVD-ROM Drive Video Card & Display (1024 \* 768 minimum resolution)
- Sound Card & Speakers / Headphones Keyboard & Mouse)

IV. Using the Interface

Here's how to navigate the program.

CONTROL	WHAT IT DOES
	Moves to the next screen. You have to click NEXT to leave text screens.
	Moves to the previous screen
	Stops the action.
	Plays or pauses the video.
	Goes to full-screen mode.
	Movie clips automatically play to conclusion, but clicking and dragging this bar allows you to move back and forth within the clip.
	Clicking on it gives you a toggle to drag along a bar to raise or lower the sound volume.

## V. Delivering the Lesson

The Advanced Leader Course can be used by individual students as distance learning and facilitated by an instructor via Blackboard or as part of a traditional classroom course. This guide covers individual online study.

# INDIVIDUAL ONLINE STUDY

## I. Working Through the Simulation

Individual students log onto Blackboard for **BACKBONE OF THE ARMY** and experience Act 1 of the simulation. They are then directed to answer the questions for that Act online. After the student exits the session, answers are submitted to the facilitator on Blackboard, who gives feedback on the answers. If the facilitator finds the answers to be unsatisfactory, then the student revises them and resubmits for facilitator review. When the facilitator judges the submissions to be satisfactory, then the facilitator “approves” the module in Blackboard and sends notice to the student to return to Blackboard and select Act 2. That process is repeated for Acts 2 and 3.

Each Act should take approximately 20 minutes for the student to complete, with about 20 minutes more needed to answer the questions posed by facilitators via Blackboard. With three acts, the total time for **BACKBONE OF THE ARMY** should be about 2 hours.

## II. Starting the Simulation

Facilitators and students will log onto Blackboard as they would normally do and follow the prompts to **BACKBONE OF THE ARMY** simulation.

The main menu will appear. Students will begin with Act 1.

To prepare for facilitating the group's experience with **BACKBONE OF THE ARMY**, read about Sergeant Sharpe and review the decisions described below for each Act. For each decision, the available choices are listed, along with any short- or long-term consequences. At the end of each Act are also questions that can be used in Blackboard to assess student learning, along with key content points and sample scripts that can be used in evaluating student learning.

## III. Summarizing Act 1 Decision Points



**Staff Sergeant Solomon (“Soli”) Sharpe** is a veteran of three combat tours. Raised an Army brat, he considers San Diego, California his permanent home, which is where his family lived after his Dad retired from the Army. He married his high school sweetheart before joining the Army and has two deployments to Iraq and one to Afghanistan. He has been in the Army for eight years.

As the simulation begins, he reports for duty at a new assignment and meets First Sergeant Adams, who he knew on a previous deployment and who is now the First Sergeant of another Battery in the Battalion. In Act 1 First Sergeant Adams and SSG Sharpe's father, a retired Army First Sergeant, serve as professional mentors outside Sharpe's chain of command. At the end of Act 1, if he makes sound decisions, then he is promoted to Sergeant First Class.

**Give guidance to Sergeant Daily concerning Sergeant Harding's Ranger Tab – What do you say?**

- ▶ It's not our business.
- ▶ You shouldn't repeat rumors, they may not be true.
- ▶ The uniform is important, I'll look into it. Meanwhile, don't spread rumors.

*The best response is "The uniform is important, I'll look into it. Meanwhile, don't spread rumors." This provides guidance on not spreading rumors and demonstrates a concern for the credibility and integrity of the NCO Corps.*

*If students choose to say "it's not our business" or "you shouldn't repeat rumors..." they are challenged to consider the importance of stopping rumors and demonstrating a concern for the integrity of the NCO Corps.*

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**Discuss Harding's Ranger Tab with First Sergeant Adams or handle it offline – What do you want to do?**

- ▶ Discuss it with the 1SG.
- ▶ Ask Sergeant Harding personally.
- ▶ Ask the Personnel NCO at Battalion HQ.
- ▶ Mind your own business.

*The best response is "Ask Sergeant Harding personally." This demonstrates the professional maturity to handle matters of NCO performance and discipline between peers. This illustrates the self-policing responsibilities of the Army Profession.*

*If students choose to "discuss it with the 1SG," they receive mentoring on policing the NCO ranks within their peer group. If they choose "mind your own business," Sergeant Harding is disciplined later in the Act and SSG Sharpe is strongly counseled by 1SG Adams for failing to take initiative to police the ranks or bring the question to the chain of command. If they choose to "ask Personnel NCO at Battalion HQ," they go to the following decision.*

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**Discuss Harding's Ranger Tab with Sergeant Grey, the Battalion Personnel NCO – What do you want to do?**

- ▶ Think about it.
- ▶ Mind your own business.
- ▶ When you happen to get a chance, talk to the First Sergeant.
- ▶ Talk to Sergeant Harding whenever you see him next.



*The best response is “Talk to Sergeant Harding whenever you see him next.” This demonstrates the professional maturity to handle matters of NCO performance and discipline between peers. This illustrates the self-policing responsibilities of the Army Profession.*

*If students choose to “think about it,” or “mind your own business,” SSG Sharpe fails to take action, Sergeant Harding is disciplined later in the Act, and SSG Sharpe is strongly counseled by 1SG Adams for failing to take initiative to police the ranks or bring the question to the chain of command.*

*If students choose “... talk to the 1SG,” SSG Sharpe receives mentoring on policing the NCO ranks within his peer group.*

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### **Out with fellow NCOs – Bring up Harding’s Ranger Tab?**

- ▶ No, it’s best not to spread rumors.
- ▶ Just ask generic questions about unauthorized uniform items.
- ▶ Yes. Ask if they’ve heard anything about Harding’s Tab.

*The best response is “No, it’s best not to spread rumors.”*

*If students raise the issue, the discussion becomes uncomfortable and Sharpe realizes he is merely spreading a rumor, not dealing with the issue.*

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### **Sergeant Harding says Ranger School should send orders – What do you want to do?**

- ▶ Let it go.
- ▶ You’ll get someone higher in rank to tell him to stop wearing the Tab.
- ▶ Tell him it’s unethical to wear a uniform device without orders.

*The best response is to “tell him it is unethical to wear a uniform device without orders.” SSG Sharpe appeals to SSG Harding’s identity as a professional and he decides not to wear the Ranger Tab until he receives his orders. Later, 1SG Adams recognizes and commends SSG Sharpe’s initiative to handle this issue between peers and to “police the ranks.”*

*If students decide to let it go, SSG Sharpe fails to take action, SSG Harding is disciplined later in the Act, and SSG Sharpe is strongly counseled by 1SG Adams for failing to take initiative to police the ranks or bring the question to the chain of command.*

*If students choose to say, "You'll get someone higher in rank to tell him to stop wearing the Tab," SSG Harding reacts angrily and SSG Sharpe realizes he has to go to the First Sergeant. The uniform issue is corrected, but SSG Sharpe receives mentoring on policing the NCO ranks within his peer group.*

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**Sharpe finds Secret documents behind furniture – What do you want to do?**

- ▶ Discuss options with 1SG Adams.
- ▶ Report it per the SOP.
- ▶ Research the SOP, looking for an easier way.
- ▶ Discuss with Sergeant Daily.
- ▶ Destroy the documents.

*The best response is to "report it per the SOP." This places SSG Sharpe on solid ground to mentor SGT Daily and be promoted to SFC.*

*If students choose to go outside his chain of command to discuss options with 1SG Adams, the First Sergeant mentors SSG Sharpe on exercising the judgment and courage to do the right thing regardless of the consequences. That option then goes away, and students are faced with the same choices again about what to do.*

*If students choose to "research the SOP, looking for an easier way," SSG Sharpe confirms the SOP requires he report the security violation. That option then goes away, and students are faced with the same choices again about what to do.*

*If students decide to destroy the documents, then SSG Sharpe's cover-up seems to succeed but he faces a no-notice security inspection and a chance to come clean or lie about the documents (see the later decision).*

*If students decide to discuss it with Sergeant Daily, then they face the next question.*

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**Sergeant Daily recommends destroying the documents – What do you say?**

- ▶ I want to sleep on it.
- ▶ Let's call Sergeant Brooks and ask.
- ▶ I've got to report it.
- ▶ Let's destroy them.

*The best response is to say, "I've got to report it." If Sharpe says he has to report it, then Daily protests, and students face the decision point below.*

*If students choose to sleep on it, then they face the remaining options again.*

*If they call Sergeant Brooks, he recommends destroying them, leaving students with two remaining options: to destroy them or report the incident.*

*If students decide to destroy the documents, then SSG Sharpe's cover-up seems to succeed but he faces a no-notice security inspection and a chance to come clean or lie about the documents (see the later decision).*

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**Sergeant Daily protests that Brooks' 12 years of service "should count for something" – What do you say?**

- ▶ You're right. Let's destroy the documents.
- ▶ It should count, but that's for others to decide.
- ▶ Put them back in the safe for now.

*The best response is to say, "it should count, but that's for others to decide." SSG Sharpe proceeds to report the documents and there is an investigation. This places SSG Sharpe on solid ground to mentor SGT Daily and be promoted to SFC.*

*If students delay in making a decision ("put them back in the safe for now) or if they decide to destroy the documents, then SSG Sharpe faces a no-notice security inspection and the decision that follows.*

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**During the security inspection, Sharpe is asked if there were any discrepancies in his document inventory – What do you say?**

- ▶ "No discrepancies."
- ▶ "We found some excess documents."

*The best response is to say, "we found some excess documents." Even so, SSG Sharpe is disciplined for failing to report the discrepancy immediately per the SOP, loses his security clearance and promotion to SFC, and SGT Daily is demoted to Specialist and gets out of the Army. Students are instructed to return to the earlier decisions and make better choices to succeed.*

*If students chose to lie and say no discrepancies, there are two possible outcomes. If they had chosen to destroy the documents, SSG Sharpe seemingly escapes punishment but now has a weak moral standing to deal with leadership issues with SGT Daily in later scenes. If students had chosen to put the documents back in the safe, an inspector finds them and Sharpe's violation is discovered. He loses his security clearance and promotion to SFC, and SGT*

*Daily is demoted to Specialist and gets out of the Army. Students are instructed to return to the earlier decisions and make better choices to succeed.*

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**How to deal with Daily – What do you want to do?**

- ▶ Mentor her on professionalism and the SOP.
- ▶ Tell her she needs to be more careful handling classified documents.
- ▶ Nothing, it's all under control.

*The best response is to “mentor her on professionalism and the SOP.” If Sharpe reported the documents, this mentoring is effective. If he destroyed the documents and lied to the inspectors (both of which SGT Daily observed), Sharpe lacks the professional and ethical credibility to effectively mentor SGT Daily and she responds apathetically and cynically.*

*If students choose, “tell her she needs to be more careful handling classified documents,” they receive feedback that this fails to address the development of SGT Daily's professional character. And, if Sharpe had destroyed the documents and lied to the inspectors (both of which SGT Daily observed), Sharpe lacks the professional and ethical credibility to effectively mentor SGT Daily and she responds apathetically and cynically.*

*If students choose “nothing, it's all under control,” Sharpe receives feedback that he failed step up to develop a subordinate leader as a member of the Profession. Consequently, SGT Daily leaves the Army due to the lack of attention to professional development by her superiors.*

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**Daily wants a promotion and threatens to report Sharpe if he does not endorse her – What do you want to do?**

- ▶ Call her bluff, refuse the promotion endorsement, and hope she stays quiet.
- ▶ Cave and give her the endorsement.
- ▶ Refuse the endorsement and come clean to the S2.


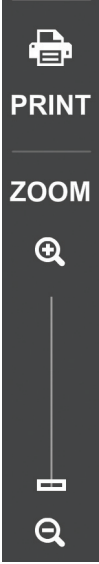
*All of these choices lead to negative outcomes. If students choose “cave and give her the endorsement,” SGT Daily is promoted but tells a friend and rumors spread. In all cases, there is an investigation with adverse consequences and students are directed to return to the previous decisions and make better choices to succeed.*

*After correcting the worst choices in these situations and completing Act 1, students are directed to the After Action Report where they correct all choices in the Act before continuing to Act 2.*



NOTE

At the end of Act 1, students will view the After-Action Report. The report reviews and analyzes each decision, and presents more questions and comments for the students' reflection. You may use this resource to facilitate learning with each student. To continue to the Decision Review page, click NEXT in the bottom right hand corner of the AAR screen. (See below for AAR Navigation instructions)

CONTROL		
WHAT IT DOES	Arrows in the upper left and right hand corners of the AAR will allow you to turn the pages.	A print/zoom tool bar on the far left side of the AAR screen will allow you to print the AAR and allow you to increase and decrease the size of the text for easier reading.

*Before students can move on to the assessment questions . . .*

NOTE

The Decision Review page lists all the decision points in each Act. Where the best possible choice was made, the decision point is grayed out and inactive. Highlighted text indicates a decision point where the best possible choice was not made. Clicking on this text will return students to that decision point, and they will have a chance to choose correctly. When all poor choices are corrected, they will be allowed to proceed on from the Decision Review page.

## IV. Assessing Student Learning for Act 1

The sample questions below can be cut and pasted into Blackboard to assess how much students have learned. The questions may also be adapted for students' different levels of experience coming into the course.

The key points below each question can be used to evaluate the student's response and incorporated into feedback as desired.

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### **1. How do Sharpe's decisions about whether and how to address Sergeant Harding wearing a Ranger Tab relate to Sharpe's role as a steward of the Profession?**

- Wearing an unauthorized and unearned badge or tab is essentially a false statement - a violation of integrity.
  - A unit's culture is shaped by everything taught or tolerated. Soldiers who tolerate false statements as symbolized by the unauthorized uniform items are contradicting a foundational aspect of the Army culture.
  - Part of being a steward means preserving and passing on a professional ethos and setting and upholding the standards of the profession. This requires truthfulness in all aspects of dealing with fellow Soldiers.
  - When a fellow leader does not follow the highest ethical standards, then the soundness of the profession is threatened, and so is the trust needed between professionals.
  - Leaders that ignore violations of the Army culture and regulations erode the trust that Soldiers need to have in their leaders.
  - Senior NCO's must have the willingness and ability to police the ranks of the NCO Corps.
  - A profession by definition is self-correcting and self-policing. Upholding the profession's standards and ensuring fellow professionals do the same is an essential part of one's identity as a professional Soldier.
  - Misrepresenting one's experience, qualifications, and accomplishments erodes the trust that Soldiers need to have in their leaders.
- 

### **2. Explain how Sharpe's decisions about handling the Secret documents he found can enhance or hinder Daily's development as a professional.**

- If Sharpe sets a good example by following the SOP and resisting pressure to compromise his integrity, then:
  - Daily will recognize that the Profession demands high standards to which everyone is held accountable.
  - She will likely respect Sharpe's commitment to obey the SOP and tell the truth, and will gain trust in the chain of command.

- Daily will develop greater trust in and respect for the chain of command.
  - Daily will learn from Sharpe's example how to sort out conflicting loyalties if he follows the SOP rather than trying to cover for his predecessor.
  - She may develop a desire to emulate the standards she observes in Sharpe and stay in the Army, or she may not and therefore not reenlist. In either case, a good decision by Sharpe helps protect the profession in the long term.
  - If Sharpe destroys the documents and violates the SOP, and if he lies about the accuracy of the document inventory, then:
    - Daily will lose respect in his integrity and will not respond positively to his attempts to mentor or correct her.
    - Daily will draw confusing and incorrect conclusions about how to handle conflicting loyalties.
    - Daily will know that Sharpe has things to hide from his superiors and will likely adopt the practice of hiding things from him.
    - Daily will not respect Sharpe or trust the chain of command.
- 

**3. Sharpe worries about what will happen to SFC Brooks, his predecessor as S2 NCOIC. What is the best way for Sharpe to balance his loyalties to SFC Brooks, his unit, and the Army?**

- There are clear guidelines published for handling security violations. The SOP is a standing order from his superior officers. He cannot violate the SOP without violating their orders.
  - The unit and the Army depend on the control of classified information. Deciding to violate proper handling of classified material introduces practices that may have negative operational consequences in the future.
  - There may be something about the handling of these documents that warrants formal investigation. If the documents were hidden for someone to steal or sell, Sharpe may be destroying the opportunity for the investigating officer to assess this threat.
  - It will be best for the Army if his behavior upholds the highest standards of discipline, integrity, and accountability. His example will encourage others to do the same.
- 

**The scripted responses below can be adapted for student feedback if desired:**

- You did well and have successfully completed this activity. Some things to take away from this activity include: (1) ..., (2) ..., etc. Next, return to Blackboard and follow the menus to Act 2.
- You need to improve your responses. What about: (1)... or (2)....? Return to Blackboard and improve your responses and resubmit for my review.

- You either did not carefully consider the question or you missed the point of the activity. I am “zeroing” out your responses so you can start with a clean slate. Return to the interactive simulation and watch with (1)... or (2) in mind. Then answer the questions again.

## V. Summarizing Act 2 Decision Points

Throughout Act 2 the preferred responses to certain decisions contribute to building trust within the Platoon. This builds a leadership climate in the Platoon that is critical in the resolution of an integrity issue late in the story on deployment.

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**Lieutenant Pendergrass mentions that the Squad Leaders prefer to work independently but gets the job done – What do you want say?**

- Sir, nobody is independent.
- Sir, I want you to feel free to check up on me.
- Sir, I'm here to support you.

*The best response is “Sir, I want you to feel free to check up on me.” This statement is a subtle way to assure the Platoon Leader that Sharpe, as Platoon Sergeant, is open and accountable as a professional should be. And, it contrasts this attitude with the immature attitude of the Squad Leader. This statement demonstrates the tact, humility, and principled thinking of an effective Senior Noncommissioned officer. This choice contributes to trust.*

*If students choose “Sir, no one is independent,” then Lieutenant Pendergrass becomes defensive and stands up for the Squad Leader. This also creates a rift between the Platoon members and Sharpe as the new Platoon Sergeant.*

*If they choose “Sir, I'm here to support you,” Lieutenant Pendergrass accepts this as a positive statement, but Sharpe fails to address a potential problem in NCO attitudes within the Platoon and misses an opportunity to mentor his Platoon Leader as a more experienced and mature professional Senior Noncommissioned Officer.*

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**Squad Leaders criticize “the geniuses who make up these rules” about having to do paperwork for collateral damage payments – What do you want to say?**

- ▶ You want them to know that you've “got their back.”
- ▶ Define the obligations of being a professional.
- ▶ Push your Squad Leaders to discuss this further.



*The best response is to “push your Squad Leaders to discuss this further.” This results in a discussion of the way professionals do their job, with accountability and procedures, and gives SSG Ramsey, a more mature individual, a chance to speak up for the right way to operate. This choice contributes to trust.*

*If students choose “you want them to know you’ve ‘got their back,’” SFC Sharpe misses an opportunity to mentor his Squad Leaders because he is still thinking like a Junior NCO.*

*If students choose “define the obligations of being a professional,” SFC Sharpe’s words are not well-received, illustrating that just talking about being a professional is often not effective.*

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### **Soldiers are calling local children “camel spiders” – What do you want to do?**

- ▶ Tell them to stop calling the locals “camel spiders.”
- ▶ Mention it to your Squad Leaders.
- ▶ Leave it alone.

*The best response is to “tell them to stop calling the locals ‘camel spiders.’” This on-the-spot correction is important; otherwise, the Soldiers misperceive Sharpe’s silence as condoning their denigration of the local children. Sharpe has an opportunity to brief the Platoon’s leadership team later to prevent this attitude from producing a bad incident.*

*If students choose “mention it to your Squad Leaders,” SFC Sharpe misses an opportunity to make an on-the-spot correction. This contributes to a bad incident later in the story if SFC Sharpe does not handle correctly the briefing of the Platoon’s leadership team.*

*If students choose “leave it alone,” then SFC Sharpe also fails to address their attitude with the Platoon’s leadership team and the Soldiers later are seen taunting the children resulting in a reprimand from the Battery Commander.*

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### **The Soldiers say they are just joking by using the term “camel spider” – What do you say?**

- ▶ Tell them to cut it out.
- ▶ Tell them it’s not just what they’re saying...it’s the attitude.

*The best response is to “tell them it’s not just what they’re saying... it’s the attitude.” By giving the Soldiers a reason for his concern, SFC Sharpe has a positive impact on their thinking. This choice contributes to trust.*

*If students choose “tell them to cut it out,” the Soldiers listen quietly but then snicker as he walks away suggesting that they did not take him seriously.*

**Later (only if students did not choose “leave it alone” when observing the Soldiers speaking about the local kids), you’re wondering if you should mention the “camel spider” incident to the Squad Leaders – if so, what do you want to say?**

- ▶ Things are good. Don’t mention it.
- ▶ Just tell the troops to stop calling the locals “camel spiders.”
- ▶ Explain to the troops why calling locals “camel spiders” is not good.

*The best response is to “explain to the troops why calling locals “camel spiders” is not good.” This leads to a discussion in which Squad Leaders are given an effective rationale to use in instructing their Soldiers. Later, some of the Platoon’s Soldiers are seen interacting in a positive manner with local children. This choice contributes to trust.*

*If students choose “things are good, don’t mention it,” some of the Platoon’s Soldiers are later seen taunting local children, resulting in a reprimand from the Battery Commander.*

*If students choose “just tell the troops to stop calling the locals ‘camel spiders,’” SFC Sharpe misses an opportunity to empower his Squad Leaders with an effective rationale to use in instructing their Soldiers. Later, some of the Platoon’s Soldiers are seen taunting local children, resulting in a reprimand from the Battery Commander.*

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**You consider whether to brief the Platoon Leader on the Soldiers calling local children “camel spiders.” What do you want to do?**

- ▶ Backbrief Lieutenant Pendergrass.
- ▶ Let it go... it’s NCO business.

*The best response is to “backbrief Lieutenant Pendergrass.” If SFC Sharpe has demonstrated an effective rationale for not denigrating the local population, the conversation turns into a chance to mentor the Platoon Leader. Subsequently, Lieutenant Pendergrass supports Sharpe when dealing with a report of Soldiers taunting local kids (a result of failing to use the chain of command to get the word to all Soldiers). However, if SFC Sharpe has not demonstrated an effective rationale for not denigrating the local population, the conversation with Lieutenant Pendergrass is ineffective, and later the Platoon Leader dismisses Sharpe’s concern about a report of troops taunting local kids.*

*If students choose “let it go... it’s NCO business,” SFC Sharpe misses an opportunity to mentor his Platoon Leader and later Lieutenant Pendergrass dismisses Sharpe’s concern about a report of troops taunting local kids. This also illustrates a potential pitfall of using “NCO business” as a reason to withhold information from the chain of command.*

**Your Soldiers return from a patrol right before the mess hall closes, and the Mess NCOIC refuses to let them in because they are dirty. What do you want to say?**

- ▶ The policy sucks and you know it.
- ▶ I'll face the heat with the Sergeant Major. Feed these troops now.
- ▶ OK, I know you're right.
- ▶ How about to-go plates?

*The best available response is to say "I'll face the heat with the Sergeant Major. Feed these troops now." By taking care of the troops, trust is improved within the Platoon contributing to a positive resolution to an integrity issue later in the story. Sharpe tells the First Sergeant, who supports Sharpe, but offers an approach that could have achieved the same result without creating a rift with the Mess NCOIC. This choice contributes to trust.*

*If students select "the policy sucks and you know it," SFC Sharpe ends up having his Soldiers eat MRE's in the barracks, reducing trust and contributing to a negative result to an integrity issue later in the story.*

*If students select "OK, I know your right," SFC Sharpe ends up having his Soldiers eat MRE's in the barracks, reducing trust and contributing to a negative result to an integrity issue later in the story.*

*If students select "How about to-to plates?" the Mess NCOIC tells him that Styrofoam containers are not available. Students are returned to the same decision point to select from the remaining three options.*

**If you have effectively mentored the Squad Leaders concerning Soldier attitudes toward the local population, you get a positive report of your Soldiers interacting well with local kids.**

**If not, you get an adverse report of your Soldiers mistreating local children and when you mention it to your Squad Leaders they downplay it – What do you want to say?**

- ▶ I'd better not hear anything like this again.
- ▶ The respect we show the locals, including kids, helps our mission environment.

*The best response is to say "the respect we show the locals, including kids, helps our mission environment." SFC Sharpe has a chance to positively mentor his Squad Leaders on the importance of focusing on how and why the Army accomplishes its mission. This choice contributes to trust. If he effectively mentored his Platoon Leader previously, Lieutenant Pendergrass is supportive. If he had not done so, Lieutenant Pendergrass dismisses his concern.*

*If students choose to say "I'd better not hear anything like this again," the Squad Leaders are unresponsive. Lieutenant Pendergrass either supports or dismisses SFC Sharpe's concern depending on whether Sharpe had effectively mentored his Platoon Leader previously.*

**On patrol, a local boy is shot by Private Mathers. Mathers seems pretty shaken up and you know there will be an investigation – What do you want to do?**

- ▶ Look into it further.
- ▶ Tell Harding to get his facts straight. There will be an investigation.
- ▶ Load up and roll.

*The best response is to “look into it further.” However, the outcome is based on the accumulation of trust within the Platoon through SFC Sharpe’s previous decision. If there is sufficient trust, SSG Harding admits that he dropped an AK-47 next to the dead boy’s body but Mathers asserts that there was a weapon that a second person ran away with. SFC Sharpe provides ethical guidance to Harding to tell the truth. If there is insufficient trust, SSG Harding maintains his story that the AK-47 belonged to the dead boy and SFC Sharpe does not provide ethical guidance.*

*If students choose to “tell Harding to get his facts straight, there will be an investigation,” Sergeant Harding does not know if Sharpe is encouraging to make up a story and stick to it, or simply tell the facts. Sharpe misses an opportunity to give ethical guidance to Harding.*

*If students choose to “load and roll,” SFC Sharpe learns nothing from SSG Harding and fails to provide ethical guidance.*

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**You could talk to Mathers on the way to the FOB – Do you put Private Mathers in your truck?**

- ▶ Let him ride with his squad.
- ▶ Put him in my truck and ask him about the incident.

*The best response is to “put him in my truck and ask him about the incident.” SFC Sharpe then has the opportunity to observe Mathers’ state of mind and provide him encouragement by describing every Soldier’s right to self-defense. Sharpe then faces the subsequent choice.*

*If students choose “let him ride with his squad,” then the outcome depends upon the accumulation of trust in previous decisions. If there is sufficient trust, then SSG Harding gives Mathers guidance to tell the truth. If there is insufficient trust, then the ride gives SSG Harding time to coach Mathers on a story to cover up the dropped AK-47.*

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**You’re talking with Mathers on the way to the FOB – What do you want to say?**

- ▶ Leave it alone. He’s got enough to think about.
- ▶ Tell him to tell the truth in the investigation.



*The best response is to “tell him to tell the truth in the investigation.” SFC Sharpe provides ethical guidance to Mathers and bolsters him with the confidence to do the right thing – and Mathers tells the truth in the investigation.*

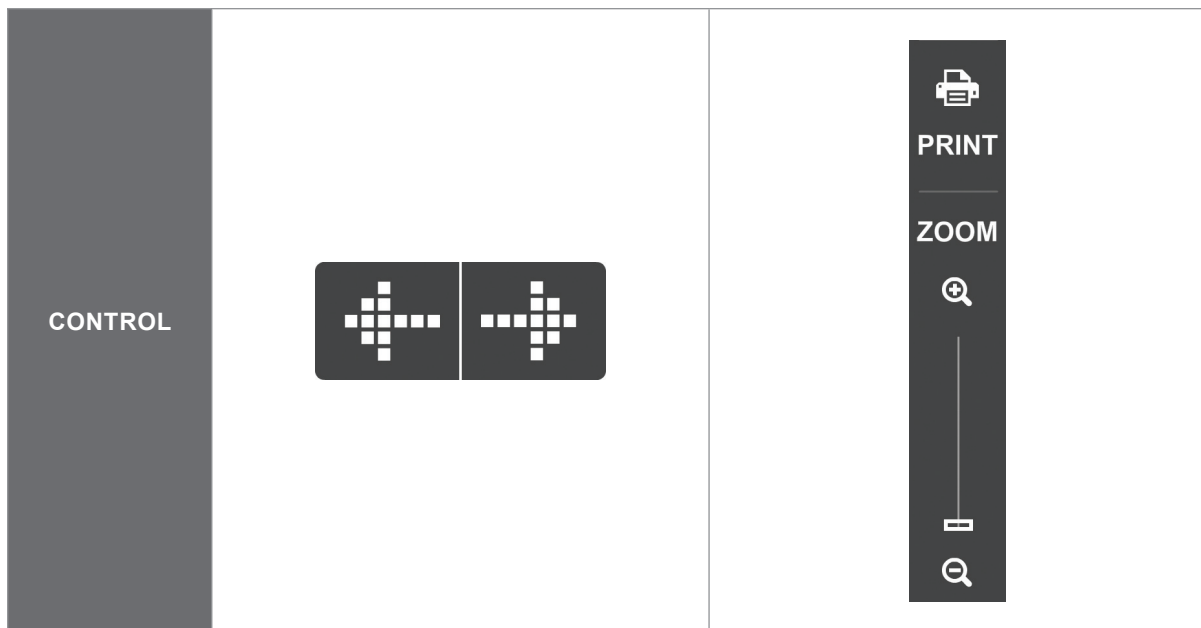
*If students choose “leave it alone, he’s got enough to think about,” the outcome depends on the accumulation of trust in previous decisions. If there is sufficient trust, then SSG Harding and Mathers tell the truth, even though SFC Sharpe did not tell Mathers to do so on the ride back to the FOB. If there is insufficient trust, both SSG Harding and Mathers lie and are cleared in the investigation.*

*There are operational consequences to the level of trust within the Platoon and SFC Sharpe’s decisions in the incident. If there is sufficient trust and/or SFC Sharpe mentors Mathers to tell the truth, the truth is discovered in the investigation and disciplinary action is taken. The local population learns that the shooting was taken seriously by the US military command and continues cooperating with US Forces and the mission is not harmed.*

*If there is not sufficient trust and SFC Sharpe does not mentor Mathers to tell the truth, SSG Harding and Mathers lie and are cleared in the investigation. The local population concludes that the US military command did not take the shooting seriously and stops cooperating with US Forces. SFC Sharpe later encounters a bitter, fellow Platoon Sergeant who has just lost several Soldiers in a well-executed ambush. SFC Sharpe suspects the lack of cooperation from the local populace contributed to this terrible loss.*

**NOTE**

At the end of Act 2, students will view the After-Action Report. The report reviews and analyzes each decision, and presents more questions and comments for the students' reflection. You may use this resource to facilitate learning with each student. To continue to the Decision Review page, click NEXT in the bottom right hand corner of the AAR screen. (See below for AAR Navigation instructions)



<p><b>WHAT IT DOES</b></p>	<p>Arrows in the upper left and right hand corners of the AAR will allow you to turn the pages.</p>	<p>A print/zoom tool bar on the far left side of the AAR screen will allow you to print the AAR and allow you to increase and decrease the size of the text for easier reading.</p>
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*Before students can move on to the assessment questions...*

**NOTE**

The Decision Review page lists all the decision points in each Act. Where the best possible choice was made, the decision point is grayed out and inactive. Highlighted text indicates a decision point where the best possible choice was not made. Clicking on this text will return students to that decision point, and they will have a chance to choose correctly. When all poor choices are corrected, they will be allowed to proceed on from the Decision Review page.

## VI. Assessing Student Learning for Act 2

The sample questions below can be cut and pasted into Blackboard to assess how much students have learned. The questions may also be adapted for students' different levels of experience coming into the course.

The key points below each question can be used to evaluate the student's response and incorporated into feedback as desired.

**1. SSG Harding dropped an AK47 because he was trying to protect PFC Mathers from punishment in a possible investigation of the shooting incident. How could Sharpe have developed Harding's character and judgment so he would never choose to do that?**

- SSG Harding did not trust his chain of command to do the right thing and protect PFC Mathers. SFC Sharpe needed to figure out how to bolster SSG Harding's confidence in the chain of command. He could do this through mentoring and explaining the reasons for decisions of the chain of command.
- SSG Harding was carrying an AK47 on his truck. Effective Pre-Combat Inspections might reveal contraband or inappropriate items and enable the Platoon Sergeant to correct the individuals involved.
- SFC Sharpe could encourage open communications and discussion of topics like "weapons drop." This might enable him to shape attitudes before the opportunity arises. It would enable him to clearly state his standards for integrity so subordinate leaders would think more clearly in the heat of the moment.
- SFC Sharpe would need to get to know his NCO's well enough to evaluate their character and ability to handle situations like this. Then, he could take corrective action and mentor as needed.

- SFC Sharpe could make it a practice to openly discuss his rationale for difficult and ethically ambiguous decisions. His subordinate leaders could learn from and imitate his thinking.
- SFC Sharpe could emphasize the obligation they all have to live up to the standards expected by the Profession and the American People.

## **2. What actions could Sharpe take in addressing the “camel spider” incident to develop the Soldiers of his Platoon?**

- Explain the reasons why denigrating the local people affects mission outcome and Soldier safety and encourage subordinates to think it through.
  - Mentor the Platoon Leader and develop a shared understanding of the importance of the issue.
  - Appeal to Soldiers' sense of professionalism and identity as professionals.
  - Use the chain of command to ensure every Soldier gets the message. Don't merely pass on an order to stop harassing local kids, but explain the reason why it's important.
  - Make on the spot corrections to ensure Soldiers know the appropriate standards of behavior.
- 

## **3. Reflecting on SFC Sharpe's decisions, what kinds of things can contribute to the development of a positive leadership climate within a Platoon?**

- Make on-the-spot corrections of Soldier attitudes that are potentially inappropriate, and give Soldiers a professional rationale for thinking the right way.
- Recognize early any immature and unprofessional attitudes among the Platoon's junior leaders and take effective steps to correct and mentor them.
- Encourage subordinates to bring their concerns to their leaders without fear of retribution or ridicule.
- Take care of his Soldiers (for example, with a hot meal), thereby building trust in the chain of command.
- Link showing respect for local people with positive mission outcomes.
- Take care that his words do not send mixed messages or imply a different message.
- Exercise the skill and tact to engage the Platoon Leader in discussions about the Platoon's NCO leaders and offer your insights as a Senior NCO as a form of mentoring “up.”
- Use the NCO chain of command to impact the entire Platoon and mentor your subordinate leaders in using effective professional rationales for doing the right thing.

- Demonstrate a willingness to be held accountable for your actions up and down the chain of command as a model a professionally mature attitude.
- Engage Soldiers and subordinate NCO's in an open discussion of the merits of situations they face. Avoid simply telling them how to think, but help them arrive at sound conclusions by asking questions.

## VII. Summarizing Act 3 Decision Points

Throughout Act 3 the preferred responses to certain decisions contribute to improving the leadership climate within the Platoon. This determines whether certain courses of action are available in Act 3 and shapes the outcomes.

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### **Sergeant Harding smells like alcohol during the morning run – What do you want to say?**

- ▶ Better come to work ready to set an example.
- ▶ Nothing, he finished strong.
- ▶ Ask about his drinking.
- ▶ Threaten to send him for a blood alcohol test – he has an example to set.

*The best responses are to make a clear statement about alcohol abuse by either telling SSG Harding he'd "better come to work ready to set an example," or "threaten to send him for a blood alcohol test – he has an example to set." The preference between these would depend on details in the detailed circumstances of the individual and the unit. A key issue is that the same standard must apply to a Staff Sergeant as would apply to any Soldier.*

*If students choose "nothing, he finished strong," Soldiers interpret this as the Platoon Sergeant condoning this behavior.*

*If students choose "ask him about his drinking," SSG Harding insists there is no problem and SFC Sharpe misses an opportunity to make a clear statement to SSG Harding and the Platoon.*

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### **SSG Harding displays a negative attitude in a meeting with SFC Sharpe – What do you want to say?**

- ▶ Nothing. Now is not a good time.
- ▶ Your tone is unacceptable!
- ▶ What's going on with you?



*The best responses are to address this behavior by either saying, “your tone is unacceptable”(leads to sequel A below), or by saying “what’s going on with you?” (leads to sequel B below). These choices lead to opportunities to get important insights into SSG Harding’s personal life issues in follow-on decisions below.*

*If students choose to say, “nothing, now is not a good time,” SFC Sharpe misses an opportunity to learn about SSG Harding’s problems at home and fails to have a positive impact on his character development.*

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**SEQUEL A: SFC Sharpe has told SSG Harding his tone was unacceptable – What do you want to do?**

- ▶ Stop, he’s got the message.
- ▶ Press him to explain himself.

*The best response is to “press him to explain himself.” Though SFC Sharpe was laying down the law firmly with SSG Harding, he demands an explanation and learns that Harding’s wife has left him. Sharpe encourages him to see the Chaplain. This contributes to an improved climate.*

*If students choose “stop, he’s got the message,” SFC Sharpe misses the opportunity to learn about SSG Harding personal problems and fails to have a positive impact on his character development.*

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**SEQUEL B: SFC Sharpe has asked SSG Harding what’s going on with him, and Harding responds in a cynical manner that dismisses Sharpe’s question – What do you want to say?**

- ▶ “Do your job.”
- ▶ “We’ll get it done together.”

*The best response is to say “we’ll get it done together.” By not taking SSG Harding’s dismissive tone as a personal insult, SFC Sharpe learns that Harding’s wife has left him and has the opportunity to understand and shape Harding’s character. This contributes to an improved climate.*

*If students choose to say “do your job,” SFC Sharpe misses the opportunity to learn about SSG Harding’s personal problems and fails to have a positive impact on his character development.*

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**Mathers returns from being AWOL. You’re discussing the matter with SSG Harding - What do you want to say?**

- ▶ You’re his Squad Leader. Get his story and meet me in the Platoon Office.
- ▶ Bring him to the Platoon Office.

*The best response is to say “bring him to the Platoon office” where SFC Sharpe gets a fuller insight into Mathers’ motivations – his wife was seriously ill while he was on leave. This contributes to an improved climate.*

*If students choose to say “you’re his Squad Leader, get his story and meet me in the Platoon Office,” SFC Sharpe does not get the insight into Mathers’ family situation since SSG Harding is unsympathetic and distracted by his own personal problems.*

*Sharpe later talks to the 1SG, who urges him to get the full story from Mathers.*

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**You’re already running late for dinner with your family, and Specialist Thomas wants to talk to you. – What do you want to say?**

- ▶ Discuss it with your Squad Leader.
- ▶ Let’s discuss it now.
- ▶ Let’s discuss it tomorrow.
- ▶ Give it to me in 30 seconds.

*The best responses are to say “let’s discuss it now” or “give it to me in 30 seconds.” Either choice leads to SFC Sharpe learning that Specialist Thomas has concerns about SSG Harding’s treatment of Mathers’ situation. This enables Sharpe to question Harding about the leadership climate within his Squad and provide effective mentoring. These contribute to an improved climate.*

*If students choose to say “discuss it with your Squad Leader” or “let’s discuss it tomorrow, Specialist Thomas drops it and SFC Sharpe never learns about the leadership problems within SSG Harding’s Squad.*

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**A fellow Platoon Sergeant tells you he has seen Harding apparently drunk in public off post. What do you want to do?**

- ▶ Warn Sergeant Harding to be more careful.
- ▶ Insist he self-refer for substance abuse help.
- ▶ Request a command referral for substance abuse help.

*The best responses are to “insist he self-refer for substance abuse help” or “request a command referral for substance abuse help.” Either choice makes SSG Harding angry but leads to him starting to address his alcohol abuse problems. These contribute to an improved climate.*

*If students choose “warn SSG Harding to be more careful” SFC Sharpe’s discussion with Harding is not confrontational, but Sharpe misses an opportunity to have a positive impact on SSG Harding’s character.*

**SSG Harding complains to SFC Sharpe about Private Mathers. What do you say?**

- ▶ I hear you. He needs to go.
- ▶ You should try to rehabilitate him.

*What about your Squad's leadership climate? (Note: If students have not made decisions to positively shape the leadership climate in the Platoon, this option is not on the screen.)*

*The best response is to say, "what about your Squad's leadership climate?" This choice is available only if SFC Sharpe has gained key insights into both SSG Harding and Private Mathers, and taken decisive action to address SSG Harding's alcohol abuse. This causes SSG Harding to rethink his harsh posture toward Mathers and to a good outcome.*

*If students choose to say "I hear you, he needs to go," the NCO's never learn the details of Mathers' personal situation and SFC Sharpe misses an opportunity to mentor SSG Harding. Mathers receives severe punishment for his AWOL, and he goes AWOL again leading to a disastrous outcome.*

*If students choose to say "you should try to rehabilitate him," SSG Harding replies that he has tried and that Private Mathers is a hopeless case and Sharpe misses an opportunity to mentor SSG Harding. Mathers receives severe punishment for his AWOL and goes AWOL again leading to a disastrous outcome.*

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**A female mechanic complains about inappropriate touching by two Soldiers in SFC Sharpe's Platoon. SSG Harding offers to talk to Sergeant Bradley, the mechanic's Section Sergeant, about the situation. What do you want to say?**

- ▶ Good idea, Sergeant Harding, talk to Sergeant Bradley.
- ▶ Let me talk to Sergeant Bradley.
- ▶ No one talks to Sergeant Bradley until I first talk to the First Sergeant.

*The best response is to say "no one talks to Sergeant Bradley until I first talk to the First Sergeant." The First Sergeant talks to the Headquarters Battery First Sergeant and mentors SFC Sharpe on the importance of following administrative procedures in sensitive cases like this.*

*If students say "Sergeant Harding, talk to Sergeant Bradley," then it looks like a cover-up, which later damages Sharpe's credibility and that of the command. SFC Sharpe is severely reprimanded by the First Sergeant.*

*If students choose to say "let me talk to Sergeant Bradley," then they face the decision below.*

**Staff Sergeant Bradley confirms the sexual harassment occurred and asks what you want him to do – What do you want to say?**

- ▶ Tell PFC Jennings I'm taking care of Carstens and Morales.
- ▶ I'll discuss it with my First Sergeant.

*The best response is so say "I'll discuss it with my First Sergeant." However, the delay in reporting or seeking guidance results in some intense mentoring by the First Sergeant.*

*If students choose to say "Tell PFC Jennings I'm taking care of Carstens and Morales," she interprets this to mean he is protecting them. It looks like a cover-up which damages Sharpe's credibility and that of the command. This results in SFC Sharpe receiving a severe reprimand from the First Sergeant and learning he will likely see the Battalion Commander and Sergeant Major as well.*

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### **Outcomes for Act 3:**

To reach the best outcome, students must choose to make several decisions that contribute to an improving leadership climate within the Platoon.

- SFC Sharpe must press SSG Harding to learn that Harding's family has left him.
- SFC Sharpe must get personally involved in learning about PFC Mathers' motivations for going AWOL.
- SFC Sharpe must choose to talk with Specialist Thomas to learn about his concerns with the leadership climate in SSG Harding's Squad.
- After receiving a report of SSG Harding's public drunkenness, SFC Sharpe must take affirmative action to get him into substance abuse counseling.



*These choices then open a better choice when discussing Mathers' discipline with SSG Harding, to ask Harding about the leadership climate within his Squad. This results in a series of positive outcomes for PFC Mathers, SSG Harding, Specialist Thomas, and ultimately for SFC Sharpe.*

*If Sharpe fails to gain those insights and take the actions related to leadership climate, he does not have the knowledge or inclination to question SSG Harding's leadership. Consequently, PFC Mathers goes AWOL again and is imprisoned, SSG Harding gets punished for DUI and leaves the Army, and Specialist Thomas loses faith in his leadership and does not reenlist. SFC Sharpe knows that he bears some responsibility for the negative things that accumulate around him.*

### **NOTE**

At the end of Act 3 students will view the After-Action Report. The report reviews and analyzes each decision, and presents more questions and comments for the students' reflection. You may use this resource to facilitate learning with each student. To continue

to the Decision Review page, click NEXT in the bottom right hand corner of the AAR screen. (See below for AAR Navigation instructions)

CONTROL		
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VIII. Assessing Student Learning for Act 3

The sample questions below can be cut and pasted into Blackboard to assess how much students have learned. The questions may also be adapted for students' different levels of experience coming into the course.

The key points below each question can be used to evaluate the student's response and incorporated into feedback as desired.



**1. What actions could Sharpe take in dealing with Harding's drinking to impart the ethos of the profession?**

- Ensure that all unit members understand that the standards of behavior apply equally to everyone, at all ranks.
  - Earn respect through effective communications skills and mature demeanor.
  - Focus on and appeal to the professionalism of each individual.
  - Ensure that individuals who display a negative behavior change related to duty performance and substance abuse are referred to appropriate counseling.
- 

**2. What actions could Sharpe do to mentor and develop Harding when addressing the Mathers situation?**

- Make sure he understood SSG Harding's situation and the lens through which Harding was seeing Mathers.
  - Anticipate SSG Harding's challenges in dealing with Mathers in an objective and temperate manner. Rather than delegating the task of interviewing Mathers, personally interview Mathers with Harding present to demonstrate how to do it effectively.
  - Ensure Harding understands the importance of getting the entire story from Mathers and remind Harding what it was like to be a young Soldier.
  - Challenge Harding to reflect on the leadership climate with in his Squad, and to enlist other junior personnel to better understand Mathers' issues.
- 

**3. What actions could Sharpe take while in garrison to positively shape the command climate?**

- Exercise the people skills to really understand subordinates and their motivations and problems.
- Leadership in a garrison environment is challenging, with lots of turnover and multi-tasking. Exercise superior judgment in knowing when to delegate and how to supervise.
- Always encourage Soldiers to use the chain of command, but exercise the discernment to know when issues are too pressing or sensitive to wait.
- Make sure your Soldiers know that they can freely share difficulties with you without retribution or ridicule.
- Develop expertise in the administrative and leadership practices of the Army, which are needed to guide a unit in garrison, training, and in combat in a way that upholds the governing law, policy, and doctrine. Know how to follow prescribed procedures and when to be innovative to find appropriate solutions when guidance is not explicit.

The scripted responses below can be adapted for student feedback if desired:

- You did well and have successfully completed this activity. Some things to take away from this activity include: (1) ..., (2) ..., etc.
- You need to improve your responses. What about: (1)... or (2)....? Return to Blackboard and improve your responses and resubmit for my review.
- You either did not carefully consider the question or you missed the point of the activity. I am “zeroing” out your responses so you can start with a clean slate. Return to Blackboard and complete the questions in the activity and resubmit them for my review. You may also select Act 3 to experience the interactive simulation again before attempting the questions.

# TECHNICAL SOLUTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This section answers technical questions, helps to trouble-shoot problems, and offers suggestions to create a technically better presentation of The Advanced Leader Course in a classroom setting.

## I. Projecting for a Large Audience

**BACKBONE OF THE ARMY** can be projected onto a screen for large audiences, given the right equipment, **if the classroom/auditorium is already set up to project multimedia.**

**If the classroom auditorium is only set up to use or project TV/VCR images,** and you want to project the simulation, then you have two options.

- a ) Large computer monitor (21" or more) for a small group.
- b ) Computer projection system with LCD projector for large groups.

## II. Graphics/Color Issues

**BACKBONE OF THE ARMY** is designed to work best in a screen resolution of at least 1024 by 768, with at least High Color (16 bit) color palette/depth.

## III. Playback Problems

### Video Skips and Hesitations

**BACKBONE OF THE ARMY** is not made for older computers. Skips and hesitations in the video indicate that part of your computer is not processing quickly enough. This is generally caused by a lack of either CPU processor speed, amount of physical memory (RAM) or both.

If you have the minimum system requirements, you may be able to improve performance by closing all other applications and/or decreasing your desktop resolution. You can also try playing the simulation in the minimized screen version rather than full screen.

### No Sound

Double-check the wires—be certain that the speakers have electricity, that all the connections are in the right places, and that the speakers are turned on and the volume is up.

If you still do not have sound, contact your computer support technicians and tell them you may have a problem with your sound card or speakers.